MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET
A Museum Of County Life

IMPRESSIONS

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER • MAY 2004

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Published Seven Times A Year From September-May.
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Annual dues are individual, $15; couple/family $25; student or senior (60+) $10; senior couple $19; business/association $50; patron $100.

SUSAN WINEBERG

Your Museum

Ernest J. DuMouchelle of DuMouchelles Art Galleries in Detroit examines a Dakota Sioux tomahawk belonging to Marian Zwinck at the Antiques Appraisal in April. Photo: Susan Wineberg

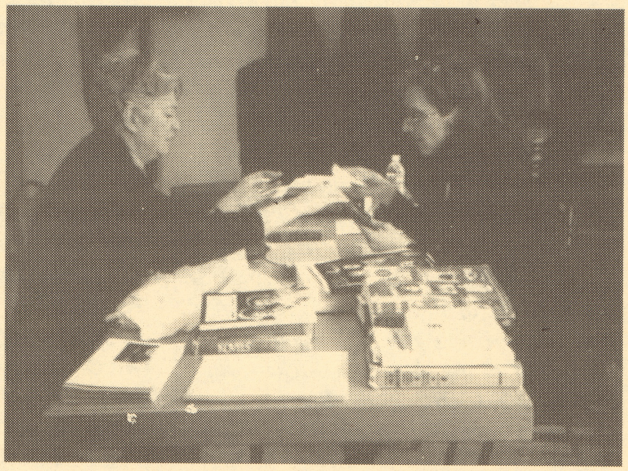
Our **Antiques Appraisal** by **Du Mouchelles Art Galleries** of Detroit was a great success! We had 54 people attend and we made **$1,027.77** profit. We are sorry about the mix up with the times—it was a failure of communication! We hope if you made it you enjoyed yourself. Thanks are due to **Patty Creal** who organized it all, and to volunteers **Pauline Walters, Gladys Saborio, Ann DeFreytas, Cathy Knox, Judy Chrisman, Richard Galant, Cynthia Yao, Ralph Beebe and Tom Freeman** and **Alice Cerniglia.**

We are gearing up for our **Annual Meeting** at the **Perry Building (formerly the Perry School)** May 19 and we will have the following slate of officers proposed for approval. **President, Judy Chrisman; Vice-President Ralph Beebe; Treasurer, Patty Creal; Recording Secretary, Ann DeFreytas; and Corresponding Secretary, Pauline Walters.** For **Directors** we have **Susan Wineberg, Richard Galant, Patricia Austin, Rosemarion Blake, Tom Freeman and Roy Reynolds.** For **Director-at-Large** we have **Donald C. Smith.** For the **Endowment Committee** we have **Tom Mich.** This means that both Pauline Walters and myself are retiring from the positions we were elected to in 1999, the year the Museum opened. Thanks to the **Nominating Committee**: **Sue Kosky, Gladys Saborio** and **Rosemarion Blake.**

We are also starting to think about the **Art Fair Parking** which **Julie Creal Goodridge** will again coordinate it. It is always the third week in July and we need volunteers to help park cars and raise money for WCHS. If you want to help, contact the museum at **734-662-9092.**

Judy Chrisman, Collections Chair is moving quickly to get our things out of storage at Willow Run and into a new facility. She proposed a long list of items to deaccession that were either duplicates or damaged and the Board voted with her recommendations. She and **Cynthia Yao** have found what appears to be the perfect spot that is heated, secure, good sized, clean, accessible and free space! It hasn't been officially rented but things look promising. Judy also reported that the **Bach Estate** items for sale by **Gary Kuehnle's** Chelsea Collection in Chelsea have already brought us $7,000 and we still have about 50 items there left to sell.

Continued on page 13.



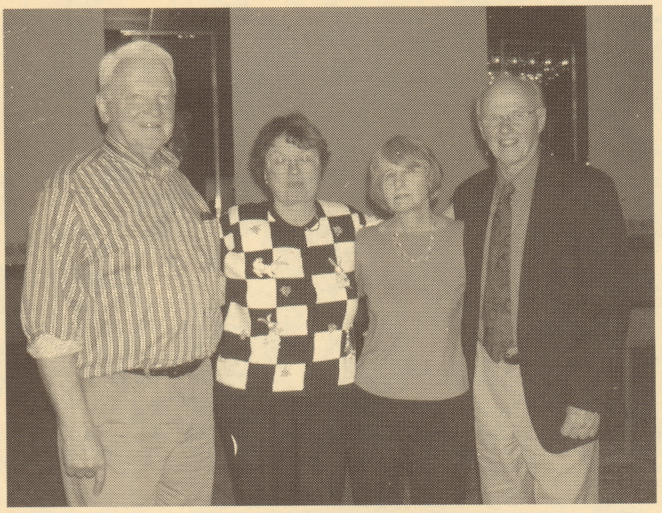
Gladys Saborio has her items appraised at the Antiques Appraisal in April. Photo: Susan Wineberg

RAYMOND DETTER, LOUISA PIEPER AND GRACE SHACKMAN

THE DOWNTOWN ANN ARBOR STREET EXHIBIT PROGRAM:

A Unique Look At Ann Arbor's Cultural Heritage Through Transparent Frames And Wall Images

On an unseasonably warm and gorgeous April 18, in the ballroom of the Courthouse Square Apartment Building, some 30 people heard Ray, Grace and Louisa discuss the past, present and future of the Street Exhibit Program as it is called by many of those involved. The program involves scores of volunteers, of whom your editor is one, who have served as historical consultants, design consultants, or fundraisers. To date, 15 permanent sidewalk exhibits have been erected throughout the downtown. Two more are planned for the Broadway Bridge upon its completion. The markers are in three main areas: Main Street and Kerrytown, the campus area around State Street and South University, and the area between them. Another exhibit will be at the Michigan Central Railroad Depot, which, for over a century, was the entry into town. To learn more, visit their website at ***www.emich.edu/public/geo/exhibits.***



Speakers for the Street Exhibit Program Louisa Pieper, Grace Shackman and Ray Detter pose with Vice President and Program Chair Ralph Beebe. Photo by Ilene Tyler.

Ray Detter *is the driving force behind this project that was started in 1988. Detter, who has a Ph.D. in history from the University of Michigan, has lived downtown for 43 years. He was instrumental in creating the Old Fourth Ward Historic District and now serves as the Vice-President of the Old Fourth Ward Association. He is also the Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA).*

Louisa Pieper, *who has coordinated the writings of the various consultants and fund raising efforts, served as the city's staff of the Historic District Commission from 1975-1999. She has also served in numerous positions with the Washtenaw County Historical Society and is currently President of the Kempf House Association. Since her retirement, she has actively worked on the Street Exhibit Program accompanied by her dog Fred.*

Grace Shackman *is active with the Old West Side Association and its famous Homes Tours and wrote for the* ***Old West Side News*** *for many years. After working as a journalist for the* ***Chelsea Standard****, she became a history columnist for the* ***Ann Arbor Observer****. She also teaches local history classes at Washtenaw Community College and has a weekly call-in program with Ted Heusel on WAAM radio. She also had an active political career, serving for eight years as an elected Washtenaw County Commissioner and as Chair of the Democratic Party. She recently published two books on local history in the Arcadia series:* ***Ann Arbor in the 19th Century*** *and* ***Ann Arbor in the 20th Century.***

A **short video** was shown and we learned about the program through the mellifluous tones of our own **Wystan Stevens,** a very knowledgeable native historian and one of the history consultants on the project. Other history consultants include **H. Mark Hildebrandt, Suzy Stearns, Susan Wineberg, Ralph Beebe, Linda Walker** and **Fran Wright. Carl Luckenbach** serves as Project Architect, **Norman Tyler** as Chair of the Exhibit Design Charette, and **Don Hammond** as the graphic designer. The video provides an overview of the project, whose aim is to illustrate the history and diversity of Ann Arbor's rich and diverse downtown neighborhoods.

"Each exhibit has a theme that is presented through images and historic artifacts. Stories about the people, activities and events that have historically defined downtown reinforce the special qualities of Ann Arbor life through the years. Through transparent frames, strategically placed, images of the past are superimposed on present surroundings. The Downtown Street Exhibit program takes local history out of the library and puts it on city sidewalks. The hospitality business is illustrated by the bustling streetscape at Huron and Fourth Avenue surrounding the grand Allenel Hotel. Other exhibits showcase our city's cultural heritage and the roles of Business, Banking, Manufacturing and Education in shaping our community.

Located throughout the city center, the historical street exhibits serve both as an interactive educational experience and as a walking tour of historic downtown Ann Arbor. The Downtown Historical Street Exhibits Program began at the grass roots level. It was developed by local residents. The concept was enthusiastically supported by the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission, the Ann Arbor Historical Foundation, the DDA, City Council and others. Seed money for research came from the National Endowment and the Michigan Council for the Humanities.

The unique design concept emerged from an intense brainstorming session during which over 20 local design professionals, architects, landscape architects, and graphic designers participated in the all day charette. **Michael Ettema,** one of

the consultants in the early period, thought it would be wonderful to sit somewhere and see an old photo of what had been there before. 'History would jump out at you when you didn't expect it!' **Don Hammond** explained that for each image on the glass you would be able to look through it and get a sense of what used to be there.

From this early meeting, a team of designers volunteered to develop the concept fully. **Carl Luckenbach** stated 'we were also concerned about permanence and resistance to vandalism. That too influenced our decisions on how to go about implementing this. The basic frame is two layers of tempered glass with a plastic layer sandwiched in between. The construction is identical to the windshield of an automobile.

Local historians then researched each theme, selected photographs and wrote the text elements. At each exhibit site is a transparent glass panel. These are supplemented by porcelain enamel plaques engraved with historic images. In addition, cast metal replicas of historical objects engage viewers in a unique way. These unique exhibits, in combination, offer the pleasure of discovery over time to pedestrians throughout downtown.

The first exhibit, installed in 1999, celebrates the original heart of downtown Ann Arbor, Courthouse Square. This exhibit includes a large pedestal with a map showing the businesses and activities around the square in 1908. As laid out by the city's founders in 1824, the courthouse block was a spacious village square. The first courthouse was built in 1833, and was surrounded by a large lawn. Commercial buildings eventually lined the streets on all four sides.

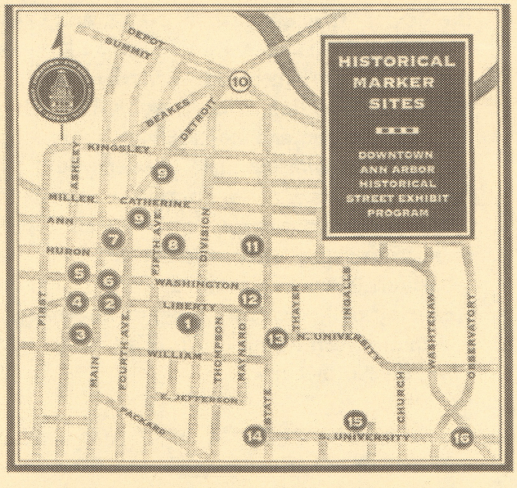
The second courthouse, built in 1878, was downtown's major landmark up to the 1950s. Its seven-story clock tower and park-like setting proclaimed its importance to the community and the region. In the 1950s, this historic courthouse was replaced by a modern building. The new courthouse was built around the old one, which remained in place until the new building was completed. An employee then working at the courthouse recalled 'I could open my window and reach out about 12 inches and touch the new building.' Through the street exhibit's transparent frames, viewers are able to see the old courthouse, represented over the actually existing courthouse building.

The installation of each building element was carefully planned. Each frame, and its circular base, was laid out at the site using a template. Steel brackets were then embedded in the concrete and stainless steel posts attached and leveled. The specially fabricated glass panels were quickly set in a track and each post then sealed into place. The exhibit site was completed by sandblasting the circular concrete pad to expose an aggregate finish. The footsteps allowed us to align the images of the past with the present.

Of course, once each exhibit is completed, it's time to celebrate! State and local officials joined project leaders in the dedicatory ceremonies. Each installation is celebrated with a big party, giving an opportunity to recognize and thank the donors and volunteers. The Street Exhibit Program is truly a celebration of the history and life of downtown Ann Arbor. The exhibits appeal to all ages and are designed in coordination with the city's public school system to integrate the Downtown Walking Tour into the curriculum. Residents and visitors alike delight in the way our history is presented, and we discover more about our city as we explore its downtown."

Grace Shackman began the discussion by summarizing how the three of them get to the points described in the video. Every week they meet at Ray Detter's house on N. Division Street for about six hours. "Using the themes that were developed at the start of the project, we first developed the glass frames at each of the 16 sites. At present, wall images are being prepared for many of the walls of buildings on Main Street that are near the glass frames. These are designed to develop a more specific story. Artifacts too are used to help viewers understand the past. These three elements currently exist only at the courthouse exhibit. In the future, they will be preparing wall images for the campus area and the South University Area. "When we were planning the frames, we also developed the ideas for the wall images, since we needed to know what to save for the wall images. We have figured out what we are trying to say, but we haven't got it down to specifics. The frames are based around the themes, while the wall images are more outgrowths of the frames.

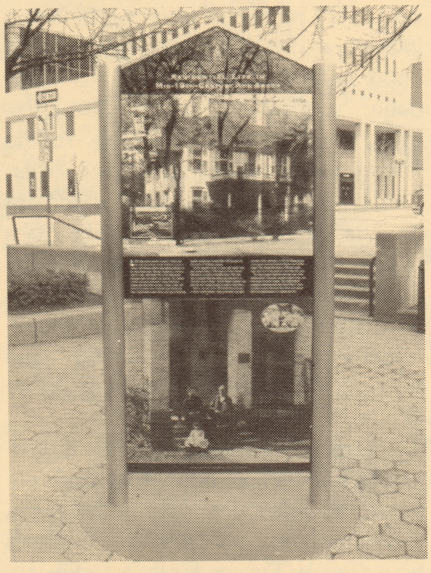
The three of us work to make sure that our facts are right and that the writing is clear, that the text will appeal both to those who are knowledgeable about the city's history and to those who know nothing. We work on these and when we have them in shape, we show them to a bigger group of historians and get their feedback. We take their comments and refine the



EXHIBITS INSTALLED IN 1999 AND 2001 ARE INDICATED WITH GRAY CIRCLES.
NEWLY COMPLETED EXHIBITS ARE INDICATED WITH BLACK CIRCLES.
EXHIBIT 10 (WHITE CIRCLE) WILL BE INSTALLED AFTER THE BROADWAY BRIDGE IS COMPLETED.

1. EAST LIBERTY & DIVISION: RESIDENTIAL LIFE OF EARLY SETTLERS AND NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE PROMINENT FAMILIES LIVED.
2. EAST LIBERTY & MAIN: THE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE THROUGH TIME: DEPARTMENT STORES, CHANGING PRODUCTS, THEATERS.
3. WEST WILLIAM & MAIN: TRANSPORTATION AND LIGHTING, STREETCARS, THE INTERURBAN, DETROIT EDISON, PARADES.
4. WEST LIBERTY & ASHLEY: INFLUENCE OF TOPOGRAPHY, INCLUDING ALLEN CREEK, ON PATTERNS OF URBAN GROWTH & CHANGE.
5. WEST WASHINGTON & ASHLEY: GERMAN IMMIGRANTS' INFLUENCE ON CITY GROWTH AND IDENTITY.
6. EAST WASHINGTON & MAIN: COMMERCE AND BANKING IN THE EVOLUTION OF MAIN STREET AND THE TOWN.
7. HURON & MAIN: TOWN LIFE AND THE COURTHOUSE SQUARE
8. EAST HURON & NORTH FIFTH: CITY SERVICES, CITY HALL, FIRE AND POLICE.
9. KERRYTOWN, AT FIFTH & DETROIT, AND DETROIT & CATHERINE: A SUPPLY, MANUFACTURING, AND SERVICE AREA BETWEEN RIVER, RAILROAD, AND TOWN.
10. TRAIN STATION, DEPOT STREET: LOWER TOWN, TRANSPORTATION, TOWN AND GOWN.
11. EAST HURON & NORTH STATE: CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS IN TOWN LIFE.
12. EAST LIBERTY & SOUTH STATE: ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURAL CHANGE.
13. NORTH UNIVERSITY & SOUTH STATE: IMPACT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN UPON LOCAL CULTURE AND COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL GROWTH.
14. SOUTH STATE & SOUTH UNIVERSITY: DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY AS AN EDUCATIONAL AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE.
15. SOUTH UNIVERSITY & E. UNIVERSITY: ACADEMIC, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL SIDE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITY AND CITY.
16. SOUTH UNIVERSITY & WASHTENAW: CHANGING PATTERNS OF RESIDENTIAL LIFE: FRATERNITIES, SORORITIES, COOPERATIVES, APARTMENTS.

The Street Exhibit Program has 16 glass frames scattered throughout the Downtown that can be seen on this map. Courtesy Ray Detter.



This frame is in the park at Division and Liberty and features information on the Watts House that once occupied the bank site and a photo of the Kempf family sitting in front of their home at 312 S. Division. Courtesy: Street Exhibit Program.

text further and then send it to an even larger group of historians and editors. We try to get it as perfect as we can and then we give it to Don Hammond, our graphic designer. He's a genius. We are always a little heavy on the word count and he tweaks the text and makes it look great.

The best part is that we always celebrate their completion at some wonderful location that Ray has found us. Condos at 1 N. Main were the celebration site for the courthouse square dedication and the unfinished penthouse condos at Ashley Mews served as another venue for the Main Street Exhibits. From this aerie there were beautiful views in every direction. To celebrate the opening of the campus markers, we used the University Art Museum. What made this ribbon cutting especially exciting was the presence of three UM Presidents, including the current one Mary Sue Coleman. Even more exciting was the presence of a great-granddaughter of President James B. Angell! So, this, in a nutshell, is how the markers are created."

Louisa Pieper then spoke with a Power Point presentation showing images of the various buildings and sites that can be found on the frames installed on State Street and South University. "There are sixteen sites. The first nine sites were taken care of by 2001. The other six sites, numbers 11-16 (see map) were done last summer. Site 11 is next to Harris Hall at State and Huron. The site theme is 'Schools and Churches' and what you see today is the Frieze Building (formerly Ann Arbor High School) but what you see on the frame is the former high school that existed on this site in the 1890s. For the churches, we have a picture of the Old Methodist Church, built in the 1870s and demolished in the late 1930s. All the churches tried to have buildings at State and Huron because of its proximity to the University.

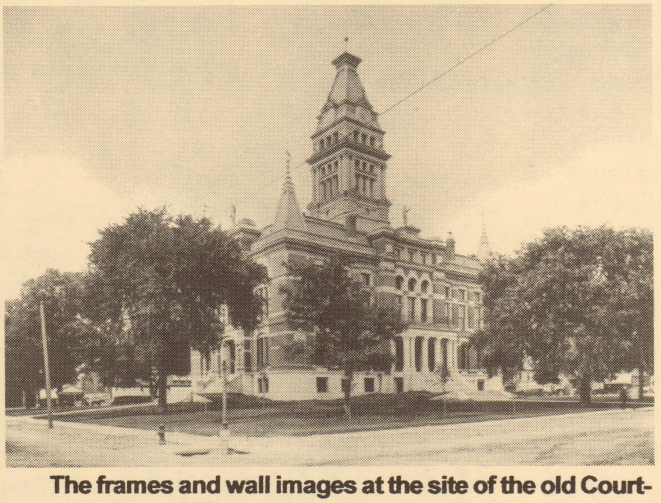
At Site 12 we have the theme of "Entertainment and Changing Culture" or how the Town and Gown worked together on entertainment. We have an aerial view looking west down Liberty, showing a Michigras (UM) Parade alongside the Michigan Theater, built by local Greek entrepreneur Angelo Poulous, who envisioned his building as a shrine to entertainment for both town and gown. Around the corner on Maynard was the old UM Music School and the Majestic Theater, and nearby on North University was the Arcade Theater and Hill Auditorium. Old University Hall on State Street served as the center of many formal events and musical performances until Hill was built. Also nearby are Trueblood Auditorium in the Frieze Building, Mendelssohn Theatre in the League, and the Rackham Building. Coupled with the State Theater, you can see that this area has always been the center for entertainment. I should also mention that there were several dance establishments nearby, including Granger's Academy of Dance on Maynard Street and the Martian Room at Drake's Candy Shop on North University.

Site 13 is at the corner of North University and State Street. There are two frames there, with the themes of the "Impact of the University on Local Culture" and "Commercial and Residential Growth." One deals with State Street as a second shopping district and features the buildings that preceded the Nickel's Arcade. Until the 1870s and 80s, all shopping was on Main Street. As the university expanded, so did shopping on State Street. We have a picture of University Hall with its dome in the center, this section of which connected the two original classroom buildings of the university. Another picture is of Otto's Band marching on North University. At one point North University was a boulevard, with the trolley running down part of it.

The other frame at this site looks toward Hill Auditorium and talks about the Winchell House, Ann Arbor's only octagon. Professor Winchell was a polymath, and professor in about four different fields including biology and physics. He was noted for advocating the admission of women to the university and for strongly opposing President Tappan. The lower half of the frame illustrates co-education and shows a women's anatomy class (women were not allowed to study this subject with men).

Site 14 is located near the Michigan Union and looks towards Angell Hall. It shows the first two college buildings, Tappan who was the first president, and University Hall. Pictures of the faculty with President Angell in 1876 show an all-male grouping. Later in 1896, the first female faculty member, Dr. Eliza Mosher, became the Dean of Women.

The pedestal display at this site shows an overview of the campus in 1907. Only a small number of these buildings survive today. It illustrates the old adage that 'poverty is preservation's best friend' and it seems the university has never been short of funds to build new buildings! Here you can see the first university hospital in the country, the first chemical labo-



The frames and wall images at the site of the old Courthouse built in 1878 are the most elaborate so far of all the displays. Courtesy: Street Exhibit Program.

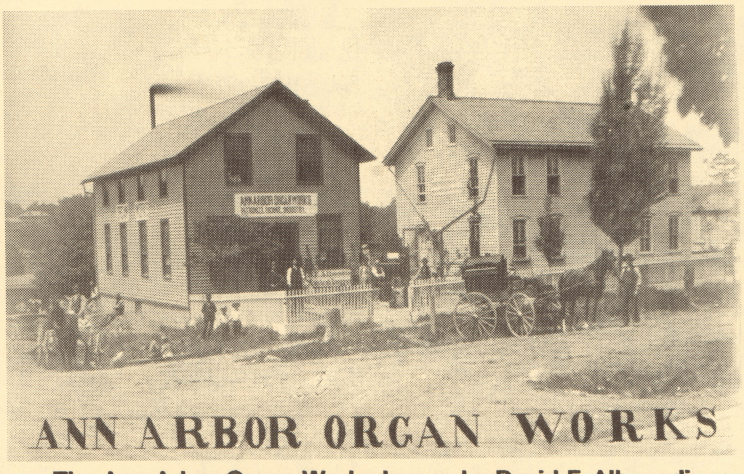
ratory constructed for that purpose, and our path-breaking Detroit Observatory, which will celebrate its Sesquicentennial this year.

Site 15 is in front of Ulrich's Books and illustrates the theme of the "Social and Political Side of Student Life." Located in the plaza that was once East University, this frame is much more contemporary than the others, with pictures of the student riots and protests of the 1960s as well as the early days of Art Fair, and a Homecoming parade.

Site 16, located at the corner of South University and Washtenaw, has the theme of "Changing Patterns of Residential Life: Fraternities, Sororities and Grand Houses." It features the residence of Professor Andrew Ten Brook in 1874, whose house was demolished for a fraternity in the early 20th century, and the Israel and Olivia Hall house which was torn down for the Museums Building. Rooming houses provided comfortable living quarters for men and women (segregated, of course) and sometimes these were in converted mansions. An interesting living situation was on South University where the Galleria is today. Here lived the Apostles, faculty bachelors who banded together in 1900 and rented a house with landlady and cook included. Their bylaws stated they were to "recreate with sports teams, formal dances and at-home parties."

Ray Detter then spoke about how this project has now become greater than they had originally envisioned. It is now a program, which will "continue after all of us are gone." But he focused on what the group is doing now, which is writing text for wall images that accompany the frames at each site. "There is never a point at which we are not working on the project. The idea is that the wall image will complement the themes. So we have one about the train wreck that destroyed the bank at Huron and Main, and others showing the building of the new courthouse around the old one.

Like the transparent frames, the wall images are funded by individuals. Each one costs $1,000. One of the things we do is seek out people who are connected to the images, and this could be the present or the past. For example, **George** and **Charlotte Sallade** funded a wall image dealing with Wahr's Bookstore [George's grandfather was a Wahr]. We also have a wall image funded by **Rosemarion Blake** that deals with the historic commercial center of the black community at Ann and Fourth Ave. **Pauline Walters** has also given us money for an image connected with the University of Michigan.



The Ann Arbor Organ Works begun by David F. Allmendinger stood at the corner of Washington and First and illustrate one of the more successful German businesses at the edge of what was once an almost entirely German neighborhood. The house was actually built by the Weil Family, Ann Arbor's first Jewish residents. Courtesy Street Exhibit Program.

Some of the wall images we plan to install this year (we hope to have them up in the fall but Louisa says next spring) include ones of the daughters of Professor Silas Douglas, which deals with 19th century residential life. We'll also show the interior of Junius Beal's home, where the AA District Library is today. Remnants of that lifestyle remain today on East Ann and North Division, which were not in the path of commercial or university development.

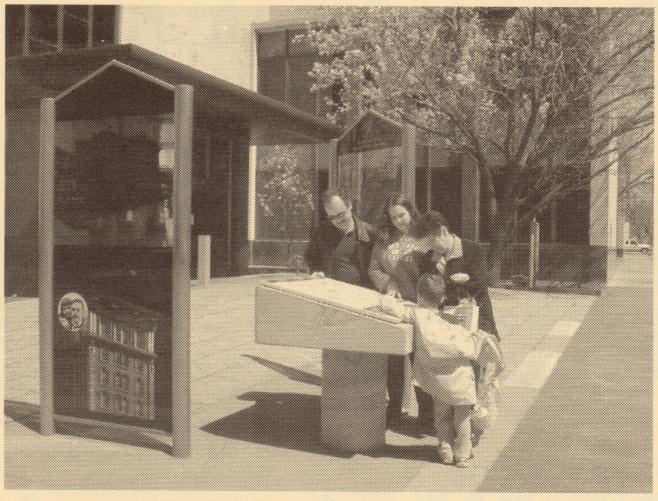
We also deal with elements of shopping, and show Baumgardner's Bakery at Main and Liberty where Selo/Shevel Gallery is today. We also have wall images on the early movie theaters (the Orpheum and the Wuerth); Ann Arbor streetcars; parades down Main Street (celebrating the circus and the end of wars); the Ann Arbor Railroad and James Ashley; the Germania Hotel (now the Earle Restaurant) and the Staebler family's businesses; stories about the German-American community; dining in downtown; dry goods and hardware stores; food and drink in downtown (funded by **Pauline Skinner**); and the physical growth of the city and the expansion of city services (fire, police, government).

We are also thinking about artifacts to display with the frames and wall images. One would be a full form corset near Main and Liberty, the site of a former corset factory. **Sue Gott** from the University of Michigan agrees with us that a re-creation of part of the beautiful 19th century fence at North University and State is a great idea.

We are also planning to have two frames near the Gandy Dancer, housed in the 1886 Michigan Central Railroad Station. The new bridge will be completed soon and as you go north you will see one frame under the bridge. We will discuss the railroad, which has been at this location since 1838 and the coal gasification plant that loomed over this formerly black neighborhood in the 20th century. There will be four wall images on the bridge itself. We haven't found a sponsor yet, but we have several prospects. It is interesting to note that those who we have approached as sponsors—and the frames cost $15,000 each—have never turned us down.

On the other side of the bridge, where the Pottawattami Stone marks the confluence of several Native American trails, we will have a frame dealing with Lower Town. It will feature Anson Brown, the 1832 Exchange Block, and the other 1830s buildings along Broadway. **Eunice Burns, Rosemarion Blake** and others are working on fund raising for this site by organizing a "Friends of Lower Town" to collect money from small donors. We have hundreds of small donors as well as big donors such as Pfizer and the DDA which each gave us $50,000. Our funding is good but we still want to involve as many people as we can.

We also have an outreach component with the Ann Arbor Public Schools. Children in the third grade complete a local history unit and last year we sponsored, with the ***Ann Arbor News***, an insert called '**Ann Arbor's Winning Hand.**' **Jan Newman,** former owner of Aristoplay, prepared a game with images of the past



Visitors to Ann Arbor use the pedestal map and two frames in front of the Washtenaw county Courthouse to learn about county history.

and the street exhibit program. This year we are going to prepare lesson plans. Each third grade class in the city of Ann Arbor will receive a copy of our film. We are also working with the **Ann Arbor District Library** to put up a website called the **Making of Ann Arbor,** using archival photographs from the UM Bentley Library. Hundreds of images will be up and linked with our website. We hope this will remain a permanent part of the public school system.

The project itself is a million-dollar project. That's what it cost us. But beyond this actual cost, there is the connection to the community to consider. We also have to consider maintenance as well. We have a $50,000 endowment so that if something happens to a frame, we can have it fixed! The frames are cleaned by the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Ann Arbor once every two months, except in the winter. I'm happy to report, however, that there is very little vandalism and graffiti on these, even to those on the UM campus. We believe this is because this is quality and people recognize it as such and respect it. I did find one label on the post at South University and went to clean it myself. Who should come along but former UM President **Jim Duderstadt**. I showed that we were not too proud to do our own clean up and he left and returned with a visiting alum who loved the project and is considering funding another part of it. Also while I was cleaning, **Maggie Ladd,** head of the South University Merchants Association, came out and handed me a check for $1,000, a downpayment on a $15,000 payment for a frame.

I'd also like to mention that we have won three **awards** for the project, one from the **Michigan Historic Preservation Network**, one from the **Historical Society of Michigan** and one from the **International Downtown Association.** As a result of all this recognition we are getting even more people who want to do something similar in their community. Last month we were visited by a delegation from Bay City.

We hope that through our outreach to the public, to the schools, and to the university communities, that we will have made a lasting impression and helped people understand the wonderful history of Ann Arbor."

Bidlack Memorial Service Set

A memorial service for **Dr. Russell Bidlack**, who died in September, will be held at the **Michigan Union's Pendelton Room** on **Tuesday, June 22**, from 4-6. All are welcome to attend. Professor Bidlack, a professor and Dean Emeritus from the School of Library Science (now School of Information), was a past president of the WCHS (1961-62) and a frequent speaker in our program series. His specialty was Ann Arbor history and he published numerous articles on **John Allen,** the founder of Ann Arbor, and his wife Ann. His last major publication was his book on **Ann Allen** (1998) after whom Ann Arbor is named. He was working on his next publication, the letters of **John Geddes** to his brother, when he died. His work has added much to the knowledge of Ann Arbor's early years, and his dedication and humor are sorely missed.

SUSAN WINEBERG

Farewell

This is the last issue of the ***Impressions*** that I will write. I took over this job five years ago upon the death of longtime editor **Alice Ziegler**. I learned from her and expanded on her vision. I hope she would be proud of that effort. I've enjoyed this immensely and would like to thank all the people who have helped me, especially our graphic designer **Deb Royal** who made my transition easy and has been a joy to work with.

In my first issue, I quoted from **Harriet Arnow's "*Some Musings on History*,"** which she gave as the Clarence Burton Memorial Lecture in 1966. It is a very evocative account of the changing rural scene in Washtenaw County and she mentions **"urban sprawl"** forty years ago when the term had just been invented. What is shocking is that she could be writing this today! It seems like we are still struggling with the same issues. She lived at **3220 Nixon Road** in Ann Arbor Township. I never finished quoting from her talk, though I meant to in every issue. Now it's my last chance. Here is Harriet Arnow, writing about the late 1950s and early 1960s in Washtenaw County:

"In spite of working in Detroit, my husband again wanted a place in the country. Early 1950 found us buying a forty-acre plot a few miles north of Ann Arbor on a gravel road. The land had once been a small farm with a number of outbuildings; all, save for a chicken house, marked only by fallen down boards and bricks.

Yet much remained: ancient fruit trees and a large grape arbor with flowers and shrubs all over. Many of these, especially lilacs and bush honeysuckle, had escaped to grow along the road with the wild grapes and raspberries, alders, swamp dogwoods, and other native shrubs. Also flourishing along the road shoulders was a succession of wild flowers beginning with marsh marigolds and ending with purple asters. Sometimes equally beautiful were the field flowers in the fence rows.

The country roads with little traffic were a walker's or biker's delight. Shaded in summer by great trees, with the heavy undergrowth to serve as snow fence in winter, the gravel roads seemed particularly beloved by wild things. Seldom did we go on them, even driving, without seeing pheasants, quail, many smaller birds, and squirrels, o'possum or a muskrat.

Surrounding us were the farm communities, real worlds built through the

generations by people for people. Inhabited chiefly by prosperous, up-to-date farmers, they seemed as secure, as stable as the big granite boulders along our back fence…

And so the years went: research, typing up notes, background readings … Much of the time I was buried in the past; even when gardening I was not so much setting onions or tomatoes as an archaeologist digging up Michigan artifacts—if a shard of blue crockery, the twisted copper of what has been a silver plated spoon, or pieces of a heavy iron cook stove can be called artifacts. The deed on the land went back to the 1840s and the garden was a rich storehouse of reminders of the years between…

My own work covered with some degree of intensity a period of less than 20 years…I was so lost in family that coming out was like walking into a different world. There was a great change in the seemingly unchangeable world of Ann Arbor and the surrounding farmlands. Yes, for the most part, I had known these changes as purely intellectual learnings, though they had touched my life in many ways.

We no longer, for example, biked or walked on our gravel road. It was now something to take you and the car where you had to go. The road was also a place where I went to pick up the trash that the speeding public threw in front of our fence. The road was now a barren, ugly place, unshaded in the summer's heat, ice choked in winter. Increased traffic called for a widening; many of the elms had died; the widening took all the locust, most of the maples and oaks along with other trees; weed killer had taken not only the flowers but also the wonderful assortment of native shrubs and vines. Two or three years later poison ivy, coarse grass and tough goldenrod began to take over.

Drouth plus strains on water level caused by nearby industrial use, along with city drains…had more or less dried up most of the ponds. We no longer saw ducks, not even in the bits of deeper water remaining. … U.S. 23 now ran through the swamp…no more wild geese resting on migration flights; no more Great Blue Herons feeding, or little fishes, or the cry of the loon we had used to hear from the dark recesses of the swamp. There were no longer dark recesses. The superhighway route was wide…

I never knew the sequence of events. One morning in spring there were tractors in an adjoining field instead of cows. The dairy farmer who had rented the field for pasture had sold his farm and moved away. The local school district…had been forced to become part of the Ann Arbor School System. This meant the end of the one room country school as well as the field flowers.

School taxes were raised in the same rate as those in Ann Arbor that were higher and higher. At about the same time Ann Arbor went into a population and building boom. Land values had so risen, re-evaluation of township properties were called for. Farmers living miles away from the high-priced land had gone into the town, had their land evaluated, not on its worth as crop land, but on what it might possibly bring when and if it were wanted for a subdivision or factory site.

Taxes climbed, not by hundreds, but by thousands of percent. The landowners, and all around were long time farmers, some heirs, could no longer afford to rent for pasture.

Yet, I saw all this—for years—only in fragments. I knew the township was growing small; many buildings had been demolished including a beautiful church, and the courthouse. This had been replaced by a huge, shiny box of a 'county building;' and alas, with no [statue of] Justice on the roof. By Ann Arbor's streets, along the country roads and fence rows, the bleached skeletons of dead elms stood to remind one that, though modern man might get to the moon, he could not save his elms.

I saw it all, but never quite comprehended until a barn told me. This particular barn with its twin tile silos and cluster of smaller buildings, I thought of as 'The brave old barn.' The last barn between us and Ann Arbor, it stood near the now-paved end of our gravel road; a research plant now stood in front of it, a subdivision with the beginnings of a shopping center on another side...It took me several minutes to realize it was being torn down. A kind of panic seized me…there had been none destroyed in my immediate neighborhood…

Yet I knew that the great hip-roofed barns of south central Michigan were disappearing, and not because they were old. Would such barns ever be built again? Certainly, the new barns would not have foundations of hand-hewn granite fieldstone, or be framed with notched and pegged timbers…and above all were there men left who could build such barns? The neighbors' barns I had visited…each had a personality of their own. As a group they were reminiscent of barns seen in Pennsylvania, New England, Ohio, parts of Canada and other places.

Later I went down the road to pester…the Ormond Kapps as I had done so many times. They had lived on their nearby farm all their married lives and were descended from early settlers. They knew the local history.

History? And what was history? Something not for people as blind as I had been to change. This immediate Michigan world was not only part of it…The disappeared farmers around us in Michigan were anything but subsistence types. When their children left the farms, they went to college and then into some profession…Their children could never know the kind of farms their fathers had known as boys. That farm would be a part of history.

I at long last had learned that history, whatever she is, does not always make headlines; nor does she tap one on the shoulder and say: 'I am history. Look at me as I pass by… The revolution in farm life came quietly with no violence, no hint of evil…'

I have spent too much time bemoaning what is gone and going. Rather, I should thank the many historical societies in Michigan and all those who have helped preserve the past through their work and donations. I am familiar with only a part of what they have accomplished, but that part has meant much to me."

Condolences

We are sad to have to report the death of long-time member **Margaret Hanselman Underwood,** who died April 1 in Ann Arbor at the age of 102! Margaret graduated from the UM with a degree in Library Science in 1925 and worked for many years in a variety of UM libraries. She lived in the historic Glazier Home on Glazier Way since 1935 and was famous for her work on the roads of Ann Arbor Township as well as for her garden. A memorial service was held April 6 at First Presbyterian Church and her friend and neighbor **Sally Bund,** a frequent speaker at WCHS, gave a very moving eulogy. She will be greatly missed but we will remember her every spring when we see the snowdrops she gave us blooming in our garden at MoMS.

SUSAN WINEBERG

News You Can Use

Several interesting historic buildings will be opening or re-opening this summer. On May 1, visitors were able to visit the historic **Farnsworth House** designed by **Mies van der Rohe** and recently purchased by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The house, designed for Dr. Edith Farnsworth in 1951 on the banks of the Fox River two miles south of **Plano, Illinois,** is the first property purchased by the trust that is from the 'recent past.' There is a visitor center at the 60-acre estate with a gift shop and works by local artists. The house is also available for rental for private functions so have your wedding or corporate meeting in the historic Farnsworth House! For more information, contact the **Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois** at **312-922-1742.**

Further south in **Asheville, North Carolina,** the American author **Thomas Wolfe's** boyhood home, a National Historic Landmark that was burned by an arsonist in 1998, has just re-opened. The house, a 29-room, 121-year-old 6,000 square foot Queen Anne house, was a boarding house operated by Wolfe's mother. It has been renovated to appear as it did in 1916, the year Wolfe left to study at the University of North Carolina. Wolfe lampooned this house in his most famous novel, ***"Look Homeward Angel"*** where he characterized it as a forlorn Dixieland rooming house. It was restored to have both the look and the feel of the times.

Love old roads? Historic road advocates from around the country spent four days together at the **Historic Roads Conference** in Portland, Oregon. You can read about their discussion at **www.historicroads.org.**

Love **old ruins**? Log on to **www.creativepreservation.org** to learn about exploring ruins in the New York City Area with **Ars Subterranea**. They like to interact with the city's neglected and ruinous locations. They even plan to have art works in some of them.

Love **modern architecture?** Attend the **DOCOMO-US** conference in September in New York City this year. This is part of an international group that does documentation and conservation (DOCO) for buildings of the Modern Movement (MO). There will be workshops on curtain walls, concrete, stone, and color and regional tours as well. Check them out at **www.docomomo.com** or **www.docomomo-us.org.**

In late April, a plea went out by email to warn us that Congress is thinking of repealing **the 10% tax credit** for the renovation of historic buildings. We were urged to contact our Senators to **not pass S.1637** and we urge you to do the same. The AIA and other groups note that renovation of such buildings using tax credits adds economic vitality to community life and preserves historic fabric and community identity at the same time.

If you like to plan ahead, mark your calendar for **September 28-October 3** for the **National Trust for Historic Preservation's** Annual conference, this year in **Lexington, Kentucky.** And also note that the **Association for Preservation Technology** holds its annual Conference in **Galveston, Texas November 4-7,** 2004.

You might also like to check out the **Michigan Land Use Institute's** website that is full of great information about sprawl, cities and preservation. They are headquartered in **Beulah, Michigan** and the office is in the fabulous Grand Traverse Commons, the former State Hospital. You can check them out at **www.mlui.org.** You can also look at the website of the **LTA** or **Land Trust Alliance**, which directly supports 200 land trusts in the Midwest and near west. They help set up professional and ethical requirements for a well-managed land trust and they hold workshops on various aspects of managing a land trust. Look at their website at **www.idealist.org.**

SUSAN WINEBERG

Around The Town

The **Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County** will hold its last meeting (I was wrong in the last issue) on **Sunday, May 23**, at 1:30 PM at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital's Special Education Center at 5303 Elliot Drive. ***"Old Salem: The Witch Trials and Beyond"*** will be discussed by members **Kathleen Conat** and **Judy Williston**. Their talk will be followed by ***"There are no Dumb Questions in Genealogy,"*** a question and answer period with a panel of club members. Look for Parking Lot "P" when you get there. You can check their website at **www.hvcn.org/info/gswc** or call **734-483-2799** for more information.

Come and visit the museum in the summer and see our beautiful flowers! Photo: Susan Wineberg

The **UM Detroit Observatory** has a reduced schedule in the summer and is closed to the public in July and August. But tours will still be held on **Wednesdays, May 5**, and **19** from 1-4 PM, and on **Sunday, June 6** and **Saturday, June 19** from 11-2 PM. The **Sesquicentennial Celebration** is **Thursday, June 17** with light refreshments beginning at 4 PM and a ceremony at 5 PM on the front lawn, with tours following the ceremony. Come one, come all!

Heather Edwards, staff of the Historic District Commission, reports that that the **Lower Town Study Committee Report** is almost ready to submit to Council for approval. She also announced that awards will be given next month for good rehabilitation, preservation and centennial businesses and organizations.

Several public meetings are being held by the **DDA** and other quasi-public bodies to discuss changing some traffic patterns involving **Huron, Fifth and Divi-**

sion Streets (which **affect several historic districts**) and also the building of **high density housing** in central downtown. At times they seem at cross purposes, trying to make some streets more walkable and aesthetically pleasing while also advocating a huge new influx of people that will only make that goal harder. The impact of these changes on the neighboring historic districts has not been discussed in any detail at all. I hope the affected groups will be actively engaged in making sure our historic districts are not adversely impacted by the changes advocated by these studies.

Concordia University, founded in 1963 and located on 187 acres at Geddes and Earhart Roads, announced plans to expand after receiving gifts of $2 million. Interim President **Thomas R. Ahlersmeyer** announced that they will begin the Church Music Institute and Center for Research on Church Life in America, quashing rumors that the school might close. With over 600 students now, the goal is to have between 800-1000 in the future.

The historic **Nichols Arboretum** hosted an unusual art installation in April. Named **Imagine/Align**, this community project involved the planting of some 10,000 daffodils in lines through the Arb. The brainchild of local resident **Susan Skarsgard**, who paid for this herself, it was her thesis project for a Master's of Fine Art and was enthusiastically supported by Arb director **Bob Grese.** An opening reception was held on Saturday, April 24 and UM President Mary Sue Coleman officially inaugurated this very special art event. After visiting the site, I was convinced that this was a great 'happening' on many levels. I'll leave the poets to describe its more spiritual aspects. It was thrilling to see it and to get into the Arb again, which I managed despite my bad knees!

Things are quiet on campus now that the semester is over. But huge **construction** projects are looming in the future. Will we ever have our quiet little town again? On State Street, prepare for construction of the **Gerald Ford Public Policy Institute** at Hill Street, and new additions to the **Kelsey Museum** and the **Museum of Art.** Of course, these will start just as the huge ones on the Medical Campus are close to completion and the **Broadway Bridge** re-opens.

SUSAN WINEBERG

Around The County

The **Washtenaw County Historic District Commission** announced its **2004 Historic Preservation Awards** last month. Winners include **Donald Limpert** of **Manchester** for his ceaseless labors over 30 years to preserve the character of his community; **Howard** and **Kelvin Braun** for their restoration of the **John Burg Farm** at 9180 Saline-Milan Road in York Township, an 1840s Greek Revival farmhouse made of adobe bricks; and the **Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission** for its rehabilitation of the 1835 **Sharon Mills complex** at 5701 Sharon Hollow Road in Sharon Township. The recipients were honored at the May 5 meeting of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners. Congratulations to all the winners!

The **Washtenaw County Historic District Commission** will erect a new historical marker at the **Harwood Cemetery,** a private burial ground at Campbell and Textile Roads in **Pittsfield Township** on **Sunday, May 23** at 3 PM. The marker honors the memory of prominent citizens buried there, including **William Webb Harwood**, who helped plat the village of Ypsilanti and built its first schoolhouse. Harwood, along with **Asher Aray**, offered sanctuary to runaway slaves during the 1840s and 1850s. The Arays, who were of mixed race, are also buried in the cemetery. For more information contact **Marnie Paulus** at **734-222-6878.**

Speaking of **Don Limpert,** he reminded us that he has a private museum of local, Civil War and Grand Army of the Republic items open to any interested group or individuals by appointment. Call him at **734-428-7400** if you are interested. It is located at 901 City Road in Manchester.

The **Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy** has acquired another 143 acres in **Superior Township,** this time with a farmstead that the Conservancy would like to make its headquarters. According to the *Ann Arbor News* of April 17, 2004, Conservancy members see this purchase as a milestone, because if they can purchase one more 20-acre parcel, they will have a continuous connection of protected land from Geddes Road north to Cherry Hill Road. This is part of their plan to have a six-mile **'greenway necklace'** through the township. The farmstead includes an **1830s log cabin** that may be the oldest building in Washtenaw County (we asked our readers once to submit nominees for the oldest building, but we never heard a peep. So, they get to make that claim I guess!) Called the **LeFurge Woods Nature Preserve** after a previous owner, the Conservancy hopes to repair a 1922 brick farmhouse, the wooden barn which is early 19th century, the log cabin used most recently as a chicken coop, and various outbuildings. The farmstead was purchased from the children of **William** and **Amanda Meyer,** for $1 million. Helping to pay for this is $225,000 from the **Washtenaw County Natural Area Preservation Program** as well as gifts from members. They still need to raise $500,000 and they have recently launched a $1.6 million capital campaign.

The **Washtenaw Land Trust (WLT)** sponsored a "Heritage Hike "N" Bike Tour in Pittsfield Township on Saturday April 24th. On **Thursday, June 3** at 6 PM, the **Friends of WLT** is sponsoring a reception at the **Matthaei Botanical Gardens.** Keynote speaker will be WCHS Board member and County Park Planner **Tom Freeman**. He will discuss the latest news on land preservation initiatives in the county and land preservation efforts. On **July 18**, the second annual **Summer Picnic** will be held at 1 PM at Park Lyndon. It is billed as a celebration of the region's agricultural lands and open spaces and is a family-friendly event. They provide the main dish and beverages and encourage others to bring a dish to pass. It is open to the public and free to members of the WLT.

Paradise was re-discovered and discussed in the *Ann Arbor News* of March 30th. Actually it was the 777 acres of **Stinchfield Woods** in **Dexter Township.** Only 15 miles north of Ann Arbor, the woods are known as the home of Peach Mountain where WUOM has its radio transmitters. There are lots of trails but almost no public parking. As a research facility, it is cared for by the UM School of Natural Resources and is open to the public from 6 AM- 6PM every day for hiking and cross country skiing as well as bird watching. You can download a topo map from the Michigan Orienteering Club at **www.MichiganO.org.** Or you can call **Vicki Jarvis** at **734-764-9316** to find out more.

Wystan Stevens is busy helping **Northfield Township** by buying 19th century letters on Ebay and donating them to their archives at the Bentley Library. He

states they now have four letters dating from 1840-42, three of which were written by **William Hallock,** who had a farm on Joy Road. They are full of political rants in favor of Hard-line Whig Politics and against President Tyler and the loco-focos, a derogatory term for Democrats derived from their brand of matches. You never know what will pop up on Ebay!

In **Ypsilanti**, I can report that the **Auto Museum** is back on track after a brush with extinction. Friends ponied up some money and they were helped by a $6,500 federal grant from ANHA, the Automobile National Heritage Area group. So far organizers have raised $125,000 according to **Pete Fletcher. Jack Miller**, curator of the museum, said the money from ANHA will be used to rehabilitate the exterior of the historic **Hudson Garage** at 100 E. Cross St. It will also help with the preservation of archival materials. Check out the museum during **Heritage Days** and the **Annual Historic Home Tour** on **Sunday, August 22.**

We hope to have both back doors operating by the end of the summer. Photo: Susan Wineberg

Ypsilanti is hot! It continues to expand as a mecca for car fans, and **Depot Town** and **Riverside Park** will host the **National Edsel Club Meet** on **June 5.** A lot of other car events are planned as well, including the **Michigan Vintage Volkswagen Festival (May 23),** the **Orphan Car Show (June 6),** and **Depot Town Cruise Nights (June 10).** Also planned is the Firehouse Museum's **Annual Truck Muster and Pump-In** on **September 11** and an **Antique Truck Show on October 2.** An *Ann Arbor News* article on April 30th reported that within the year, the community will have five historic signs featuring auto-related facts throughout the city. One sign will point out that Ypsilanti was once home to 32 gas stations!

Also in **Ypsilanti,** it was reported that the **former Kresge Building** in downtown, which has been vacant for 30 years (!), will finally be renovated for apartments and commercial space. The Ypsilanti City Council awarded a **tax break** to a group of investors in April, which will freeze the taxable value for eight years. **Eric Maurer,** the owner, has teamed up with **Stewart Beal** and **George Fotiadis** to complete this project and the tax break was the deciding factor. Beal is the son of JC Beal and grew up in his father's construction business. This former adult bookstore and adjacent building will certainly contribute to the vitality of downtown Ypsilanti, help out the DDA, and make Ypsi one of the new 'cool' cities to watch.

A grant from **Pfizer** will also keep the **Farmers Market at Depot Town** open over the summer but the Ypsilanti Parks and Recreation Program is looking for a permanent partner to keep the 1879 Freighthouse open all year. The building has been owned by the City of Ypsilanti since the 1970s and can be rented for weddings and antique auctions. The city's Recreation Dept had eliminated all programs this year, so farmers and others got to work to keep the market open.

And it was reported on April 30th that the **Yankee Air Museum,** now crammed into a historic hangar at Willow Run Airport, is launching a 15-year, **$55 million capital campaign** to build as many as a dozen new buildings for storage and display of their thousands of artifacts related to flying. The first objective is to raise $5 million for build a new hangar for the museum's four flyable vintage aircraft: B-17 and B-25 bombers, a C-47 cargo plane and a Stinson aircraft. Once they can be moved from their historic hangar, the other artifacts can be put on display there. If you are interested in joining the effort, or in giving some money, contact **David Steiner**, the Director of the Museum. Call **734-483-4030** or visit **www.yankeeairmuseum.org.**

The **Saline Area Historical Society (SAHS)** will host the Saline **Hometown Road Show** on **Saturday, July 24,** from 11-4 PM. Antique trucks will be displayed by members of the Southeast Michigan Chapter of the **American Historical Truck Society.** Over 30 unique trucks will be showcased at the Rentschler Farm, 1265 E. Michigan Avenue. A $1 donation buys you entrance to this and exhibits and tours as well as entertainment. There will also be a special exhibit of historic photographs focused on early 1900-era automobiles.

The **Rentschler Farm Museum** is a 3-acre oasis of historic buildings between the Visteon Plant and the Sauk Trail Shopping Center. It boasts a 12-room Queen Anne style home interpreted as the 1930s and 12 farm buildings (unusual to have so many preserved). Live animals are on site, and all the buildings have farm equipment. The facility is owned by the City of Saline and operated by volunteers from the SAHS. Call **734-944-0442** or **734-944-0713** to find out more! We just learned from **Bob Lane** that earlier parts of the farm, which may date back as far as 1840, have recently been uncovered. Some outbuildings have been found and the original farmhouse, which was moved and turned into a barn when the Queen Anne house was built. Lane also reported that the Depot Museum off Ann Arbor-Saline Road is being updated and they are thinking about a theme for their displays. The Mormon Church's Genealogy Department has also moved recently into their new building.

Also in **Saline, Rick Kuss** reported that the blue Gothic Revival home on Michigan Avenue next to the Dairy Queen is in danger of being demolished by a developer. Now housing an insurance company, the house probably dates to 1870 according to **Sue Kosky** who researched it with **Kathie Glynn** and was called the **Aldrich House** in the 1986 National Register nomination. It has also been called the **Barkham-Elfring House.** It was once a boarding house for teachers and now has a commercial use. Anyone interested in helping Rick keep the house alive and well should call him at **734-429-3032.**

The students in the **Preservation Program** at **Eastern Michigan University** put out a fine newsletter every semester. The latest was chock full of information and notes that next year will be the program's 25th **year** which of course calls for a big celebration. So look for more in the coming months. Recent alum **Bill Click,** who is also working with us to rehabilitate our Museum on Main Street, has been chosen to host a new TV series on **HGTV** called **DiY (Do it Yourself).** It will consist of from 25-52 thirty-minute shows beginning next fall. It will be shot

in different cities around the country. Just think—a celebrity in our midst! We are glad he hasn't given up his day job too. They also reported that alum **Rev. Lottie Jones Hood** received $500,000 from the US Dept of Education to further develop her **Underground Railroad Heritage Center** at the historic **First Congregational Church in Detroit**. This grant also funds a Graduate Assistant from EMU for three years as well. Congratulations!

Freedom Township was ready for its close-up last month when the film ***"Barn Red"*** was released. Starring film veteran **Ernest Borgnine** and made by **Rich Brauer,** the film charts the plight of farmers offered a lot of money for their property through the eyes of a city boy whose family owned a 187-acre farm in Washtenaw County. Rich, son of Carl Brauer Jr of Ann Arbor, and his siblings sold the farm to the Washtenaw County's natural areas preservation program and it will become a nature preserve. Actors from Jeff Daniel's Purple Rose Theater also helped and the film was made with Rich's proceeds from the farm sale. It is a subtle plug for more preservation, and more programs like the Purchase of Development Rights Program that exists on the Old Mission Peninsula where he lives. Brauer has made a romantic comedy about development pressures on America's farmland. For more information, visit **www.brauer.com/barnred**. Or look for it in your local theater!

SUSAN WINEBERG

Beyond Washtenaw

Lots of things are happening in **Detroit.** The **Heidelberg Project** by artist **Tyree Guyton,** which suffered abuse from two mayors of the city, has now been officially sanctioned by Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick. As such, it is now partnering with the U of D Mercy School of Architecture and the U of Michigan Business School to begin development and strategic planning. They are starting a very aggressive capital campaign (uh oh, there goes the neighborhood) to raise $183,000 to redevelop the first house on Heidelberg known as **The Penny House**. They also continue to expand their programs for children. Guyton's signature dots will lead you to their big event on **Sunday, July 18** called "Makin' Change on the Avenue—dollars make cents for Heidelberg" which will be a silent auction and entertainment at 5th Avenue in Detroit. For more information visit their website at **www.heidelberg.org** or phone **313-537-8037.** Visit the Heidelberg Project and see for yourself. It's a trip! It is four traffic lights north of Jefferson off Mt. Elliot.

The **Wirt Rowland Exhibit** will be on display in Detroit in various buildings he designed. Look for it in the **Guardian Building in July, in the Penobscot Building in August,** and in **the Detroit Public Library** (he didn't design this one) in **September.** The opening exhibit will be in Rowland's home town of **Clinton beginning May 22** and ending June 29 at the Clinton Township Public Library, 108 Brown St. Call **517-456-4141** for more information. A **symposium** will be held in Clinton on **Saturday, June 12** which involves a morning bus trip to see the Detroit Buildings and an afternoon lecture, panel discussion and dinner in Clinton. The panel includes **Kathryn Eckert, Thomas Brunk** and **Thomas Holleman.** The cost is $35 for the entire day and $25 for the bus tour only. Call the Registrar **Shirley Campbell** at **517-456-4716** if you are interested in signing up. Or visit their website at **www.wirtrowland.org.**

A new book is out on the **Art Deco Buildings** of metro Detroit. Written by Art Deco expert **Rebecca Binno Savage** with Hamtramck Historical Commission President **Greg Kowalski,** it features over 200 photos of downtown buildings, abandoned factories, churches including the Shrine of the Little Flower in Royal Oak, the Livingstone lighthouse on Belle Isle, numerous homes in Birmingham and Huntington Woods and even a drive-in movie theater. This is another in the ever-expanding Arcadia series which has highlighted many aspects of our region.

Visit the Museum on Main Street at 500 N. Main, at Beakes, when our garden is in bloom.

The **Detroit Historical Museum** launches its 75th anniversary exhibit—***American Icons: Detroit Designs***—this month. Over the course of the next year, there will be a lecture series in the fall on ***"Architects We Knew."*** Other aspects will be their new **Belle Isle by Bus** guide service, where the design from Olmsted to Albert Kahn is discussed in a 90-minute exploration of Michigan's greatest urban park. You need reservations so call **313-833-1419. Henry Amick** reports that **Historic Fort Wayne** will be open for drop-in tours this summer thanks to the **Southwest Concerned Citizens Trust,** from Memorial Day weekend until Labor Day. For more general information call **313-833-1800** or visit their website at **www.detroithistorical.org.**

Preservation Wayne gears up for the best summer activity around. Their **Saturday Walking Tours** began this month and go until September 25th. You can take tours of the Auto Heritage sites, the Cultural Center, Downtown Detroit, Eastern Market and Midtown. Their **Tuesday After Work** series began May 5th and goes until September 28th. These tours start at 5:30 PM and leave from the lobby of the Pontchartrain Hotel. You can choose from restaurants, pubs and clubs; skyscrapers; buildings of Albert Kahn; buildings of Louis Kamper; or Sculptures, Fountains and Art. They also sponsor Annual Tours. The **Mansions of Ferry Avenue Tour is June 12 and 13; the 16th Annual Theatre Tour is July 31,** and Custom Tours are available for churches, Boston-Edison, African American Heritage Sites and others. Call **313-577-7674** for more information or check out their website at **www.preservationwayne.org/tours.** They are always looking for volunteers so call them if you are free and get free tours!

You may have been following the flap about the **Wayne County** government threatening to leave its recently beautifully **restored courthouse** in downtown Detroit due to a disagreement with the original developer. Many letters have been sent urging them to stay in place, for the obvious reasons. The importance of this building to downtown Detroit cannot be overstated, nor can its restoration be treated as just another blip in its lifespan. Wayne County government

owes it to the City of Detroit to stay in its original home and live up to its bargain. It would be a tragedy for yet another historic building to be abandoned and a new one built at the edge of the county, contributing even further to the urban sprawl which is so detrimental to Detroit. We hope it gets resolved soon!

Southfield's oldest house, the **McDonnell House** dating from 1890, was saved from the wrecking ball by the **McGovern Building Group** which will renovate it and use it as their headquarters. The 2,400 square foot house is located at the NE corner of 12 Mile and Evergreen and is surrounded by 100-year old trees. Formerly an antiques shop, it was given a historic designation by Southfield in 1987.

The Ford **Rouge Plant Tours** in **Dearborn** are up and running and are already sold out for June! A feature on it appeared in the ***New York Times*** on April 16 and interest has been growing ever since. You can also spend time with your kids at the **Crossroads Village and Huckleberry Railroad** in **Flint** which opens Memorial Day weekend and is open until Labor Day. It is a collection of 34 historic buildings with vintage amusement rides and also special events at Halloween and Christmas. Check them out at **www.GeneseeCounty Parks.org** or call them at **1-800-648-7275.**

Pontiac's Strand Theater is being restored and was featured in an article in the ***Detroit Free Press*** on April 26th. Led by **Kimberly Johnson**, president of Strand Theater Center Inc, it is providing work for construction workers, and a new sense of pride in downtown Pontiac. The 1921 building will eventually be a multi-venue cultural center with two live theaters, a cinema and cabaret and reception room. It just takes time and money and no date for the opening has been set.

And **Rochester Hills** residents breathed a sigh of relief when 75-year old **Meadow Brook Hall** announced it will receive millions for restoration of its infrastructure. It is the nation's fourth largest historic house museum, just east of Oakland University's campus. The Matilda R. Wilson Fund announced a $7 million gift, which is appropriate since she willed the house to Oakland U. in 1967.

The **Michigan State University Museum** on West Circle Drive in **East Lansing** is hosting an exhibit entitled "***Fascination with Fiber***" that focuses on woven domestic items like towels and napkins from the perspective of textile manufacture in Michigan. Of course the earliest items were **hand-woven**, but by 1850 **mechanization** had begun and by 1880 Michigan had 39 mills making wool products. By 1900, Michigan wool production ranked third in the nation. By the end of World War II, this dominance had faded into history. But then **Cranbrook's role** in the 1920s began to be felt and more handweaving reappeared. It sounds like a fascinating exhibit. Call **517-355-2370** or visit **www.museum.msu.edu** for more information.

Central Michigan University in **Mount Pleasant** will hold a conference on "***Mapping in Michigan and the Great Lakes Region***" on **Friday, June 11 and Saturday, June 12.** Registration is $40.00. If you want to participate, call **989-774-6567.**

Dean Smith let me know that the **Gilbert Log Cabin** in Bad Axe has been dismantled by **Bill** and **Christine Woodward** of Harbor Beach and they will reconstruct it at their home. That is one piece of good news!

The **Plymouth Historical Society Newsletter** always has something of interest. This time they are offering pieces of the **original floorboards** from the **Daisy BB Gun Factory**—complete with BB's. Mounted in a beautiful 8x10 walnut shadow box with illustrations for collectors, the boards are $50 to the public and $35 for members. Call them at **734-455-8940.**

The **Franklin Historical Society**, which has spent the last 18 months with students from the Preservation Program at EMU, thanks Dr. Ted Ligibel and all the students for their hard work in **re-documenting its historic buildings.** They are having their new documentation reviewed by the SHPO and then it will go the State Review Board in September 2004. If approved, it will go to the National Park Service for final approval. Then Franklin can rest easy that their district meets the current guidelines for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Franklin was one of the first, if not **the first, historic district in the state of Michigan** in the early 1970s.

And I'm sad to report that **the last Oldsmobile** rolled off the assembly line April 28th in **Lansing, Michigan**, where it has been made since 1897. [I'm especially sad because we drive an Olds]. Named after its inventor **Ransom E. Olds** who started the company in Lansing as the Olds Motor Vehicle Company, it was later acquired by GM and positioned between the mainstream Chevrolet and Pontiac, which experts say was its undoing. GM cars will still be made in Lansing, but it is the passing of an era.

Kudos

The **Michigan Historic Preservation Network** (MHPN) held its annual conference in Rochester last month and several local groups were presented with awards at historic Meadow Brook Hall. The **Department of Planning and Environment** and the **Washtenaw County Historic District Commission** won the Government Award for ***HistWeb Phase I—Washtenaw County Historic Resources.*** It is presented to government institutions that "by their actions have accomplished significant positive changes in the historic preservation climate and ...have made a significant contribution to the preservation of Michigan heritage." Congratulations to **Marnie Paulus, Kathy Holtz,** and **Anne Kreykas** for a job well done! HistWeb is cool. It contains survey information, photos, and sketches of properties more than 50 years old gathered over the last 22 years. It was made possible by a federal grant and funds from Washtenaw County. Many volunteers and other organizations were involved. You can find out more at **www.ewashtenaw.org.**

MHPN also presented its citizen award to **Fred J. Beal,** president of **JC Beal Construction** of Ann Arbor, a firm that specializes in historic tax property redevelopment.

Other winners were the **Consumers Energy Post Office** in **Jackson,** the **Skillman Branch Library** in **Detroit** [both done by the **SmithGroup**], the **Eureka Building** in **Detroit,** the **Olde Town Historic District** in **Port Huron, Corktown Citizens Council of Detroit** and **Russell C. Lewis** of Oakland County who received the Lifetime Achievement Award. Congratulations to everyone!

The students of **Eastern Michigan University** also walked away with awards last month. **Karen Brandt** won the **Detroit Area Art Deco Society's** Annual Historic Preservation Award for the best student paper related to the study of art deco architecture. **Kathy Keefer** won the departmental **Preservation Excellence Award** for her outstanding academic achievement and commitment to the EMU Historic Preservation Program. And the Director of the program at EMU, **Dr. Ted Ligibel,** was presented with a letter from **Governor Jennifer Granholm** commending him for his dedication and commitment to historic preservation—30 years and counting! More congratulations all around!

SUSAN WINEBERG

Your Museum

Continued from page 1.

Local resident Sabra Briere proudly shows her Chinese porcelain at the Antiques Appraisal in April. Photo: Susan Wineberg

Things also look promising for a **newsletter editor**. Several people have shown an interest in doing it and we have now set up a committee to deal with resumes and decision making. **Pat Austin, Roy Reynolds** and **Judy Chrisman** will serve on this committee. We hope that by September all will be in place and you won't even notice the difference.

Museum Director Alice Cerniglia reported that some new UV filters have been put on our window glass to keep out the evil rays of sunlight that damage historic materials. Apparently the first product was defective and since it was under warranty it has been replaced for free. Alice accompanied **Bill Click** on a tour of the building and Bill was very forthcoming about its condition. We are to avoid heavy weights in the space on the second floor, and we will no longer have our board meetings upstairs for that reason. We also have several problems with the wood elements that were built in the early 1990s. The entire **front porch** needs to be **replaced** (except perhaps for the handrails), the entire fence needs to be replaced as it is rotting at the bottom, and it will be very expensive to **re-wire the attic** office space because of the need to remove and then replace the Plexiglas added last year. He also encouraged us to move **plants that are too close to the house**, like that lilac brought from 1015 Wall Street. The fixing of the drain near the **basement door** is also problematic because the door is set in concrete. We have our work cut out for us, as does Bill. He will deal with them slowly and in the order of their importance to the health and safety of the building occupants and the public.

Judy Chrisman shows a reporter our "What's It?" Collection at the Antiques Appraisal. Photo: Susan Wineberg

Marian Zwinck's Polar Bear Rug was originally a wedding gift from Forestry Professor Filibert Roth to his daughter in 1920 (it was her choice!). Photo: Susan Wineberg

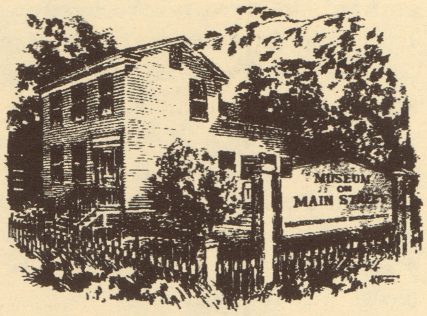
The Dixboro United Methodist Church, a Greek Revival structure built in 1858, is where our Antiques Appraisal was held in April. Photo: Susan Wineberg

Jay Snyder, chair of the **Endowment Committee,** reported that the committee met in November of 2003 and that the Ameristock Fund has about $3,000 and the Victory Fund a little over $6,000. It was moved and approved that $1,000 of dues be invested in the Ameristock Fund.

Remember When?

Here is a photograph of 306 E. Madison St. in Ann Arbor in 1904. Notice the dirt road and the railroad cars to the west beyond S. Fourth Ave. Next door, to the east, is the small home that today is the only house left standing that Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved the Jews of Hungary during World War II, lived in while a student at the University of Michigan. The home at 306 belonged to D. Fred Ehnis, a miller at Michigan Milling, then located at the Broadway Bridge. Both houses are standing today, but are covered with siding and inappropriate additions. The Wallenberg House was protected as an Individual Historic Property, but no longer has this protection since that particular district was declared invalid by the courts.

306 E. Madison in 1904, the home of C. Fred Ehnis, a miller. Next door is the historic Raoul Wallenberg House. Collection of Susan Wineberg



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